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1, 9f. *cogente cupiditate*=1, 14 *mid unrihte gewilnunge*. So 5, 6 (4, 20), 17, 25 (14, 7); 24, 3 *habundantia studiorum percepta*=20, 24 *ðurh ða lāre*; 24, 3 *me volente*=20, 24 *æt me*.

2, denoting time or place (5):

20, 18f. *finito convivio*=17, 18f. *æfter þæs beorscipes ge-endunge*. So 66, 21 (28, 6); 13, 13 *interpositis mensibus*=10, 17 *binnon feawum monðum*; 19, 8f. *finito conloquio*=15, 26 *æt þare spræcan ende*; 21, 4 *praesentibus amicis*=18, 5 *beforan minum freondum*.

3, denoting cause (1):

12, 16f. *vestra felicitate faciente*=9, 27 *for eowre gesælðe*.

IV. By an Adverb (1):

15, 18 *profusis lacrimis*=11, 18 *sarlice*.

Summing up, we see that, of forty-four Latin ablatives absolute which are translated in the Old English version, only six are rendered by an absolute construction, and two of those by the formula, *gode fultumiendum*, thus leaving only four the original work of the translator. Of the others, sixteen are translated by a subordinate clause, ten by a co-ordinate clause, eleven by a prepositional phrase, and one by an adverb.

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### ENGLISH VERSIFICATION.

*A Primer of English Verse*, chiefly in its Æsthetic and Organic Character, by HIRAM CORSON, LL. D., Professor of English Literature in the Cornell University. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1892.

THE pupils of Professor Corson go out from under his instruction filled with an intense appreciation of the power of many of the masterpieces of our literature, and eager for further study. His work as a popular lecturer, also, has life-giving power. The most important rival to his own 'Introduction to Browning' is perhaps that by Alexander, and Professor Alexander's interest in the poet was awakened by hearing some of Corson's lectures.

It is a matter for congratulation, therefore, that Professor Corson is publishing some of that illuminating criticism which has enriched his lectures and his class-room. His helps to

the study of Browning and Shakespeare have been followed by the work now before us.

This book is ripe fruit. It is filled with pithy remarks, wise comments, each expounding some phase of the inner nature of poetry, or interpreting the soul of some great poem. Many helpful quotations are given, both from the poets themselves, and from those commentators who have expressed important bits of criticism with especial cogency.

The brief form of the title, 'A Primer of English Verse,' is somewhat misleading. We think of a *primer* as a text-book that discusses in a simple way the fundamental facts in some branch of study. As the full title of the present work indicates, it really puts before us *Some of the Higher Laws of English Verse*. This title may help my readers to understand the scope of the book. The following are some of the subjects treated: Effects Produced by Exceptional and Varied Metres; Effects Produced by a Shifting of the Regular Accent; Some of Tennyson's Stanzas; The Pictorial Adaptedness of the Spenserian Stanza; The Sonnet; Blank Verse.

Let us quote a few of Professor Corson's penetrating sentences.

"The second verse of a rhyming couplet must be slightly stronger than the first, in order to support the enforcement imparted by the rhyme" (p. 23).

"The feelings of the reader of English poetry get to be set, so to speak, to the pentameter measure, as in that measure the largest portion of English poetry is written; and accordingly other measures derive some effect from that fact" (p. 33).

Concerning the stanza of 'In Memoriam,' Corson says:

"By the rhyme-scheme of the quatrain [*a l b a*], the terminal rhyme-emphasis of the stanza is reduced, the second and third verses being the most closely braced by the rhyme. The stanza is thus admirably adapted to that sweet continuity of flow, free from abrupt checks, demanded by the spiritualized sorrow which it bears along" (p. 70).

"In the *ottava rima* there are but two rhymes in the first six lines, the rhyme-scheme being: *ab ab ab cc*. Such a rhyme-scheme... is 'too monotonously iterative'; and the rhyming couplet at the close seems, as James Russell Lowell expresses it, 'to put on the brakes with a jar'" (p. 89).

"There are hundreds of English sonnets

which have the two distinct rhyme-schemes required, while there is no turn or change in the subject-matter of the sestet from that of the octave. In such cases they are without any organic significance" (p. 146).

Mrs. Browning's "Sonnets from the Portuguese"

"have taken on the exterior semblance of what organically they are not. They are the most beautiful love-poems in the language, but they cannot be classed as sonnets" (p. 175).

With the philosophy of the following striking passage, I can agree in the main, but not entirely:

"The true metrical artist, or the true artist of any kind, never indulges in variety for variety's sake. . . . All metrical effects are to a great extent *relative*—and relativity of effect depends, of course, upon having a standard in the mind or the feelings. . . . Now the more closely the poet adheres to his standard,—to the even tenor (modulus) of his verse,—so long as there is no *logical* nor *aesthetic* motive for departing from it, the more effective do his departures become when they *are* sufficiently motivated. All non-significant departures weaken the significant ones" (p. 48).

Nevertheless, is not some variety of effect necessary in order to save a poem from monotony, from "an excess of selfhood"? Unity of impression is a fundamental principle in all art, but it is always a unity in variety. If the poet is able to make all his departures from the norm significant, well and good; but the artistic need of variety must be satisfied, as well as the demands of expressiveness. After the poet has introduced variety of effect for the sake of expression, so far as this is possible, he is then free to introduce variety for variety's sake up to the point where it becomes a blemish. Of course, a certain superlative excellence will be reached in those cases where expressiveness and variety make about the same demands, and where every variation from the standard is highly significant. Though Professor Corson's view is a healthy protest against a mechanical conception of poetry, it seems to me, also, that it overlooks too completely the artistic limitations of the poet himself, and the limitations of language, the material in which he works. Surely it was the temptation of the rhyme that led Wordsworth to say concerning his wife, in one of his very finest passages:

"And now I see with eye serene  
The very pulse of the *machine*."

There is no instance cited by Professor Corson of the expressive use of a trochee for an iambus, for example, where I cannot agree with him as to the force of the substitution; yet in reading "Paradise Lost" with a class, some years ago, it seemed to us that many such substitutions are not distinctly expressive. I italicize two trochees in a passage which Corson cites on p. 216, and which he recommends that students memorize. While these trochees give variety of movement, they do not seem to me to have special expressiveness, since there seems to be no peculiar emphasis attached to the word *West*, and the *Ganges* is no more important than the *Indus*.

. . . "sea he had searched and land  
From Eden over Pontus, and the pool  
Maeotis, up beyond the river Ob;  
Downward as far antarctic; and in length  
*West from Orontes to the ocean barred*  
At Darien, thence to the land where flows  
*Ganges and Indus*: thus the orb he roamed  
With narrow search, and with inspection deep  
Considered every creature," . . .

"Paradise Lost," ix, 76-84.

There are a few other things in this Primer which, at my present stage of development, I cannot entirely accept.

"Even 'to' before the infinitive may receive the ictus:

"That 'gainst thyself thou stick'st not to conspire."

(p. 41) I cannot give any ictus to this *to*.

Corson speaks on p. 85 of the closing lines of the stanzas in Tennyson's poem "To the Rev. F. D. Maurice" as having each two *axx* feet and one *axa* foot (*a*=an accented syllable; *x*=one that is unaccented). It seems to me that we hear each of these lines as having four feet; the three preceding lines of every stanza, also, have each four accents and four feet. The following is a specimen of the lines in question:

"Making the little one leap for joy." (l. 4).

"In every verse of 'Christabel,' the number of accents, and consequently, the number of feet [apply this principle to the line last cited], are regularly four; but the number of syllables varies from seven to twelve" (p. 19).

This form of statement is that of Coleridge

himself, in his preface to "Christabel"; but it does not allow for exceptional lines like the third, which has only four syllables, and the fifth, which has only six.

" 'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,  
And the owls have awaken'd the crowing cock,  
Tu- whit! ——— Tu- whoo!  
And hark, again! the crowing cock,  
How drowsily it crew."

Evidently, Coleridge intended that the third line be read with two accents (the printing sometimes suggests that it has four) and two silent feet, and that the fifth line be read with three accents and one silent foot. It is only lines having four accents, then, that must have as many as seven syllables.

The style of the following sentence is not up to Professor Corson's standard; perhaps some clerical oversight is concerned:

"There is not, generally, in his [Marlowe's] plays, that sanity of mind and heart, that well-balanced and well-toned thought and genuine passion, to have brought out the higher capabilities of the verse" (p. 189).

It will surprise no one that Corson gives unqualified praise to the blank-verse of Robert Browning's "Ring and the Book" (pp. 224-6). Perhaps most of us, however, will agree with Professor Raymond, when he says that Browning, through the excessive use of ellipsis, "drifts into obscurity, and this, too, where there is no occasion for it in the sense, nor gain from it in the effect" ('Poetry as a Representative Art,' p. 164).

I think that the ear takes in many English stanzas as having a different primary form from that which they show to the eye. I hear in six groups the various parts of the stanza in Milton's hymn "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," as follows:

1. 6 *xa* (with internal rhyme)
2. 6 *xa* (ending with a silent foot)
3. 6 *xa* (with internal rhyme)
4. 6 *xa* (ending with a silent foot, and rhyming with 2)
5. 6 *xa* (ending with two silent feet)
6. 6 *xa* (rhyming with 5).

In a similar way, my ear catches the stanza of Shelley's "Ode to a Skylark" as made up, fundamentally, of three lines of six accents each. The ear seems to grasp a stanza in

sound-groups of equal length, where that is practicable. I accept in full, however, Professor Corson's helpful remarks upon these two stanzas. We are certainly conscious of the relations that are brought out by the printed form. (Cf. 'Primer of Eng. V.,' pp. 136 and 140, and especially the suggestive quotation from Peter Bayne on p. 81.)

As a critic and interpreter of English poetry, Professor Corson has become a contemporaneous classic.

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### GERMAN DRAMA.

*Maria Stuart.* Ein Trauerspiel von Friedrich Schiller. Edited (with introduction, English notes, genealogical tables, etc.) by KARL BREUL, Ph. D. Cambridge: University Press. 1893. 8vo, pp. xxxi, 272.

DR. BREUL enjoys already a wide reputation as an able and scholarly editor of German Classics. He has contributed five volumes to the Pitt Press Series, all of which contain very good work. In one point, however, he has laid himself open to serious criticism; he is entirely too prolix in his notes. In his edition of 'Tell' there are one hundred pages of notes (in fine print) to one hundred and forty-four pages of text; the whole book contains three hundred and thirty-three pages. The volume before us shows a marked improvement in this respect; there are only eighty-five pages of notes to one hundred and sixty-five pages of text, although the play itself is more difficult than 'Tell.' But the notes still contain much that is superfluous or out of place; they discuss not only grammatical and lexical difficulties, but also questions of etymology and historical grammar, with occasional references to Behaghel's 'Die deutsche Sprache,' Erdmann's 'Syntax,' Kluge's 'Etymological Dictionary' and other standard works.

Besides the text and the notes, the book also contains an introduction which has been wisely "restricted to what was absolutely necessary," and which comprises a summary of Schiller's life and works, a statement of the origin of the play, a criticism of its form and of its